

Official 0005

S/N: 09/312,797

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10-19-01  
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(b) coding said assigned symbols of the input object mask;  
(c) decomposing said input object mask into a plurality of object mask layers of different spatial resolution;

B1  
cont (d) coding a base object layer of said plurality of object mask layers; and

(e) coding a next higher layer of said plurality of object mask layers in accordance with information from a lower object mask layer.

27. (Twice amended) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions, the plurality of instructions including instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of a method for coding an input object mask, where said input object mask has a plurality of regions, said method comprising the steps of:

B2  
cont (a) assigning at least one symbol to each of the plurality of regions;

(b) coding said assigned symbols of the input object mask;  
(c) decomposing said input object mask into a plurality of object mask layers of different spatial resolution;

(d) coding a base object layer of said plurality of object mask layers; and

(e) coding a next higher layer of said plurality of object mask layers in accordance with information from a lower object mask layer.

B3  
cont 29. (Twice amended) An apparatus for coding an input object mask, where said input object mask has a plurality of regions, said apparatus comprising:

means for assigning at least one symbol to each of the plurality of regions;